

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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P 121155Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 480

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 2427

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: FIGUERES KEEPS THE PRESSURE ON

1. ACAN-EFE ON JUNE 10 RAN ON ITS WIRE SOME STRONG LANGUAGE FROM FORMER PRESIDENT FIGUERES ABOUT THE NEED TO MAKE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES IN THE COSTA RICAN GOVERNMENT. THE ACAN-EFE NEWS ITEM DID NOT RUN IN ANY OF THE COSTA RICAN PRESS.

2. FIGUERES WAS REPORTED BY ACAN-EFE AS SAYING TO A UNIVERSITY AUDIENCE THAT HE IS CONVINCED THAT COSTA RICA NEEDS A DICTATOR WHO IS NOT A TYRANT AND WHO RESPECTS CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL LIBERTIES FOR COSTA RICANS AND THAT HE HAS DECIDED TO INTRODUCE PROFOUND CHANGES THAT WILL MAKE MORE VIABLE THE SOCIETY'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN JUSTICE. FIGUERES WAS REPORTED BY ACAN-EFE AS NOTING THE NECESSITY FOR A DICTATOR IN ORDER TO FACILITATE A SERIES OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES THAT WILL "PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MORE JUST SOCIETY IN COSTA RICA."

3. EXCELSIOR ON JUNE 11 PUBLISHED FIGUERES' "CLARIFICATION" OF THE ACAN-EFE STORY AGAIN WITHOUT CARRYING THE TEXT. IN EXCELSIOR FIGUERES EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD PARTICIPATED AT A UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICA SEMINAR (ON JUNE 9) TO DISCUSS HIS BOOK LA
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PBREZA DE LAS NACIONES DURING WHICH HIS ALLEGED

DECLARATIONS WERE MADE. DON PEPE WENT ON TO SHARPLY SLAP THE COSTA RICAN ACAN-EFE REPRESENTATIVE FOR "USING HIS INSTITUTION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF HIS DISTORTED POLITICAL PASSIONS." HE SAID HIS REMARKS WERE TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT. THEN FIGUERES WAS QUOTED AS FOLLOWS, "IT IS CORRECT THAT I AM THINKING AND SPEAKING WITH THINKING PEOPLE ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING THE COSTA RICAN DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM MORE EFFICIENT, PERHAPS AS A RESULT OF A SITUATION THAT JUSTIFIES RAPID MEASURES OVER A SHORT TIME. I BELIEVE THAT WE ARE CONVERTING OURSELVES INTO A PEOPLE OVERWHELMED WITH RIGHTS AND EMPTY OF OBLIGATIONS." FURTHER HE WENT ON "I BELIEVE ALSO THAT WE NEED FEWER REGULATIONS AND MORE AUTHORITY. FEWER PROTESTS AND MORE RESPONSIBILITY."

4. FIGUERES ALSO RECOUNTED SEVERAL OF THE CURRENT RUMORS WHICH SUGGEST DIVERGENCE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND PRESIDENT ODUBER. HE CHARACTERIZED THESE AS UNFOUNDED.

5. COMMENT: THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT FIGURERES SAID WHAT ACAN-EFE REPORTED. A KNOWLEDGEABLE EMBASSY SOURCE SAID A TAPE WAS MADE AND ACAN-EFE QUOTED FROM THE TAPE. THE CLARIFYING DECLARATIONS PUBLISHED WITHOUT THE CRITICIZED TEXT OBVIOUSLY IS DESIGNED TO PROTECT FIGUERES' FLANKS WHILE PROJECTING HIS VIEWS.
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Message Attributes

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